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The Royal Society of London

PHILOSOPHICAL TRANSACTIONS

Volume 55
1765

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PHILOSOPHICAL
TRANSACTIONS,
GIVING SOME
ACCOUNT

OF THE
Present Undertakings, Studies, *and* Labours,

OF THE
INGENIOUS,

IN MANY
Confiderable Parts of the WORLD.

V O L. LV. For the Year 1765.

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THE Committee appointed by the *Royal Society* to direct the publication of the *Philosophical Transactions*, take this opportunity to acquaint the public, that it fully appears, as well from the council-books and journals of the Society, as from repeated declarations, which have been made in several former *Transactions*, that the printing of them was always, from time to time, the single act of the respective Secretaries, till the Forty-seventh Volume. And this information was thought the more necessary, not only as it has been the common opinion, that they were published by the authority, and under the direction, of the Society itself; but also, because several authors, both at home and abroad, have in their writings called them the *Transactions of the Royal Society*. Whereas in truth the Society, as a body, never did interest themselves any further in their publication, than by occasionally recommending the revival of them to some of their secretaries, when, from the particular circumstances of their affairs, the *Transactions* had happened for any length of time to be intermitted. And this seems principally to have been done with a view to satisfy the public, that their usual meetings were then continued for the improvement of knowledge, and benefit of mankind, the great ends of their first institution by the Royal Charters, and which they have ever since steadily pursued.

But the Society being of late years greatly enlarged, and their communications more numerous, it was thought adviseable, that a Committee of their Members should be appointed to reconsider the papers read before them, and select out of them such, as they

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should judge most proper for publication in the future *Transactions*; which was accordingly done upon the 26th of March 1752. And the grounds of their choice are, and will continue to be, the importance or singularity of the subjects, or the advantageous manner of treating them; without pretending to answer for the certainty of the facts, or propriety of the reasonings, contained in the several papers so published, which must still rest on the credit or judgment of their respective authors.

It is likewise necessary on this occasion to remark, that it is an established rule of the Society, to which they will always adhere, never to give their opinion, as a body, upon any subject, either of nature or art, that comes before them. And therefore the thanks, which are frequently proposed from the chair, to be given to the authors of such papers, as are read at their accustomed meetings, or to the persons, through whose hands they receive them, are to be considered in no other light, than as a matter of civility, in return for the respect shewn to the Society by those communications. The like also is to be said with regard to the several projects, inventions, and curiosities of various kinds, which are often exhibited to the Society; the authors whereof, or those who exhibit them, frequently take the liberty to report, and even to certify in the public news-papers, that they have met with the highest applause and approbation. And therefore it is hoped, that no regard will hereafter be paid to such reports, and public notices; which in some instances have been too lightly credited, to the dishonour of the Society.

C O N-

C O N T E N T S

T O

V O L. LV.

- I. *AN Account of the Pholas Conoïdes, by J. Parsons, M. D. F. R. S.* p. 1.
- II. *An Account of the Case of a young Lady who drank Sea Water for an Inflammation and Tumour in the Upper Lip. Communicated by Dr. Lavington of Tavistock, in Devon, to John Huxham, M. D. and F. R. S.* p. 6.
- III. *A Letter to the Right Honourable the Earl of Morton, President of the Royal Society. Containing Experiments and Observations on the Agreement between the Specific Gravities of the several Metals, and their Colours when united to Glass, as well as those of their other Proportions: By Edward Delaval, F. R. S. M. A. Fellow of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge.* p. 10.
- IV. *An Account of the Case of an extraneous Body forced into the Lungs: By William Martin, Esquire, of Shadwell. Communicated by Mr. Emanuel Mendez da Costa, Librarian of the Royal Society.* p. 39.
- V. *An*

CONTENTS.

- V. *An Account of an Earthquake felt at Lisbon, December 26, 1764: In a Letter to the Rev. Samuel Chandler, D. D. F. R. S.* p. 43.
- VI. *An Account of the White Negro shewn before the Royal Society: In a Letter to the Right Honourable the Earl of Morton, President of the Royal Society, from James Parsons, M. D. F. R. S.* p. 45.
- VII. *An Account of an Improvement made by Mr. Peter Dollond in his New Telescopes: In a Letter to James Short, M. A. F. R. S. with a Letter of Mr. Short's to the Rev. Thomas Birch, D. D. Secret. R. S.* p. 54.
- VIII. *Some Account of a Salt found on the Pic of Teneriffe, by W. Heberden, M. D. F. R. S.* p. 57.
- IX. *Short and easy Methods for finding (1.) The Quantity of Time contained in any given Number of Mean Lunations; (2.) The Number of Mean Lunations contained in any given Quantity of Time; (3.) The Number of Troy Pounds contained in any given Number of Avoirdupoise Pounds, and vice versa; (4.) The Quantity and Weight of Water contained in a full Pipe of any given Height, and Diameter of a Bore; and consequently, to find what Degree of Power would be required to work a common Pump, or any other Hydraulic Engine, when the Diameter of the Pump-bore, and the Height to which the Water is to be raised therein, are given. Communicated by Mr. James Ferguson, F. R. S.* p. 61.
- X. *A Recommendation of Hadley's Quadrant for surveying, especially the surveying of Harbours, together with a particular Application of it in some Cases of Pilotage. By the Rev. John Michell, B. D. F. R. S.* p. 70.
- XI. *An*

C O N T E N T S.

- XI. *An uncommon Anatomical Observation addressed to the Royal Society, by John Baptist Paitoni, Physician at Venice: Translated from the Italian.* p. 79.
- XII. *An Account of a New Improvement of the Portable Barometer. By Edward Spry, M. D. of Totness, Devon: In a Letter to the Right Honourable James Earl of Morton, President of the Royal Society.* p. 83.
- XIII. *A Letter from Mr. Woolcombe, Surgeon at Plymouth Dock, to Dr. Huxham, F. R. S. concerning the Case of a Locked Jaw.* p. 85.
- XIV. *A Description of a beautiful Chinese Pheasant; the Feathers and Drawing of which were sent from Canton to John Fothergill, M. D. F. R. S. By Mr. George Edwards, F. R. S.* p. 88.
- XV. *A Catalogue of the Fifty Plants from Chelsea Garden, presented to the Royal Society by the worshipful Company of Apothecaries, for the Year 1764, pursuant to the Direction of Sir Hans Sloane, Bart. Med. Reg. et Soc. Reg. aliquando Præses: By John Wilmer, M. D. clariss. Societatis Pharmaceut. Lond. Soc. Hort. Chelsean. Præfectus et Prælector Botanic.* p. 91.
- XVI. *A Course of Experiments to ascertain the specific Buoyancy of Cork in different Waters: The respective Weights and Buoyancy of salt Water and fresh Water: And for determining the exact Weight of human and other Bodies in Fluids. By John Wilkinson, M. D. F. R. S. of London and Göttingen.* p. 95.
- XVII. *An Account of the Disease, called Ergot, in French, from its supposed Cause, viz. vitiated Rye. In a Letter from Dr. Tissot, of Lausanne, to George*

C O N T E N T S.

- George Baker, M. D. F. R. S. *Communicated to the Rev. Thomas Birch, D. D. Sec. R. S.* p. 106.
- XVIII. *Observations for settling the Proportion, which the Decrease of Heat bears to the Height of Situation. Extracted from a Letter of Thomas Heberden, M. D. F. R. S. to William Heberden, M. D. F. R. S.* p. 126.
- XIX. *An Account of a Stone voided without Help from the Bladder of a Woman at Bury. Communicated by William Heberden, M. D. F. R. S.* p. 128.
- XX. *A Letter from John Bevis, M. D. to the Rev. Thomas Birch, D. D. Secretary to the Royal Society; containing Astronomical Observations, made at Vienna, by the Rev. Father Joseph Liesganig.* p. 130.
- XXI. *An Account of the Case of a supposed Hydrophobia: In a Letter to the Rev. Thomas Birch, D. D. Secretary to the Royal Society, from the Right Honourable James Earl of Morton, President of the Royal Society.* p. 139.
- XXII. *Two Theorems, by Edward Waring, M. A. Lucasian Professor of Mathematics in the University of Cambridge, and F. R. S. In a Letter to Charles Morton, M. D. Sec. R. S.* p. 143.
- XXIII. *A Dissertation on the Nature of Evaporation, and several Phænomena of Air, Water, and boiling Liquors: In a Letter to the Rev. Charles Dodgson, D. D. F. R. S. From the Rev. Hugh Hamilton, D. D. F. R. S. Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of Dublin.* p. 146.
- XXIV. *Physical and Meteorological Observations, Conjectures, and Suppositions. By Benjamin Franklin, LL. D. and F. R. S.* p. 182.
- XXIV. *Histo-*

C O N T E N T S.

- XXIV. *Historical Memoirs relating to the Practice of Inoculation for the Small Pox, in the British American Provinces, particularly in New England: Addressed to John Huxham, M. D. F. R. S. By Benjamin Gale, A. M.* p. 193.
- XXV. *An Account of a Balance of a new Construction, supposed to be of Use in the Woollen Manufacture. By W. Ludlam, B. D. Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge.* p. 205.
- XXVI. *An Experimental Enquiry into the Mineral Elastic Spirit, or Air contained in Spa Water; as well as into the Mephitic Qualities of this Spirit. By William Brownrigg, M. D. F. R. S.* p. 218.
- XXVII. *Extract of a Letter from Mr. Benjamin Gale, to a Physician in New England, to John Huxham, M. D. F. R. S. concerning the successful Application of Salt to Wounds made by the Biting of Rattle Snakes; dated at Killingworth in Connecticut, 20 August, 1764.* p. 244.
- XXVIII. *Extracts of three Letters of Sir F. H. Eyles Stiles, F. R. S. to Daniel Wray, Esquire, concerning some new Microscopes made at Naples, and their Use in viewing the smallest Objects.* p. 246.
- XXIX. *An Account of the Sequel of the Case of Anne James, who had taken the Green Hemlock: In a Letter to the Rev. Thomas Birch, Secretary to the Royal Society, from Mr. Josiah Colebrooke, F. R. S.* p. 271.
- XXX. *Some Account of the Effects of a Storm of Thunder and Lightning in Pembroke College, Oxford, on June 3, 1765: In a Letter from Mr. Griffith, of the said College, to the Rev. John Swinton, B. D. F. R. S.* p. 273.
- b
- XXXI. *On*

C O N T E N T S.

- XXXI. *On the Nature and Formation of Sponges : In a Letter from John Ellis, Esquire, F. R. S. to Dr. Solander, F. R. S.* p. 280.
- XXXII. *Extract of a Letter from Dr. John Hope, Professor of Medicine and Botany in the University of Edinburgh, to Dr. Pringle ; dated Edinburgh, 24 September, 1765.* p. 290.
- XXXIII. *A Memoir, containing the History of the Return of the famous Comet of 1682, with Observations of the same, made at Paris, at the Marine Observatory, in January, February, March, April, May, and the Beginning of June, 1759. By Mr. Messier, Astronomer, Keeper of the Journals, Plans, and Maps belonging to the Marine of France, Fellow of the Royal Society in London, and Member of the Society of Sciences in Holland ; translated from the French by Matthew Maty, M. D. Sec. R. S.* p. 294.
- XXXIV. *On the Transit of Venus in 1769, by the Rev. Mr. Hornsby, F. R. S. and Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford.* p. 326.